

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04894 01 OF 02 231237Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 SES-02 SAA-01 SSM-03 IO-13 ACDA-12
TRSE-00 OMB-01 HA-05 EB-08 AID-05 NEAE-00 /110 W
-----084087 231313Z /45

O P 231201Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9361
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
COMSIXTHFLT
CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
DIA WASHDC
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4894

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, AUGUST 23, 1978 - 1300 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 4857 (DTG 220809Z AUG 78)

1. SUMMARY: THE EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE CONTINUES TO HOLD
GENERALLY. ANOTHER RPG ROUND HIT THE PORT WHERE ACTIVITY HAS
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 04894 01 OF 02 231237Z

NEVERTHELESS INCREASED. UN UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL BRIAN
URQUHART FLEW BACK FROM JERUSALEM TO BEIRUT ON AUGUST 22 AND
LUNCHEDED WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR
SAID FRANCE WOULD PROBABLY APPROVE RENEWAL OF UNIFIL'S
MANDATE FOR ANOTHER SIX MONTHS. CHRISTIAN MILITIA IN
MARJ'UYUN SHELLED HASBAYYA, AND THERE WERE THREE
FIRING INCIDENTS INVOLVING UNIFIL TROOPS IN SOUTH

LEBANON. THE CAR OF PARLIAMENTARY DEFENSE COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN FUAD LAHOUD WAS DYNAMITED. ISRAELI PLANES
AGAIN BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER OVER BEIRUT. END SUMMARY.

2. EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE.

EAST BEIRUT CEASE-FIRE CONTINUES TO HOLD
GENERALLY, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SMALL ARMS FIRE IN
AYN AR-RUMMANEH AREA THE EVENING OF AUGUST 22-23.
NLP LEADER CAMILLE CHAMOUN ON AUGUST 22 CAST DOUBT
ON THE OPTIMISM HIS SON DANY HAD EXPRESSED THE DAY
BEFORE. DANY HAD SAID HE WAS "SOMEWHAT OPTIMISTIC
AFTER MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS."
CAMILLE, COMMENTING ON HIS SON'S STATEMENT, ASKED,
"HOW CAN ANYONE BE CONVINCED (BY THE STATEMENTS OF
PRIME MINISTER HOSS) WHEN HE LOOKS AROUND HIM AND
SEES BARRICADES RISING HIGHER INSIDE VARIOUS
BUILDINGS? ... I SEE IN THESE SIGNS NOTHING
BUT AN INTENTION TO TAKE AGGRESSIVE ACTION ..."

3. PORT OPEN.

AT 0800 HOURS AUGUST 23 ACTIVITY WITHIN PORT APPEARED
TO HAVE RISEN ANOTHER NOTCH TOWARD NORMAL LEVELS.
SUBSTANTIAL QUANTITIES OF MERCHANDISE HAVE BEEN
REMOVED FROM PORT SINCE AUGUST 19. NEW SHIP
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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 04894 01 OF 02 231237Z

MOORINGS EXCEPT AT GRAIN ELEVATOR HAVE NOT BEEN
ATTEMPTED. THREE VESSELS ARE WAITING ENTRY, INCLUDING
U.S. FLAG M/V TEX CARRYING 23,000 M/T PL 480 WHEAT
FOR GOL. AT ABOUT 10:30 HOURS ONE RPG ROUND EXPLODED
IN THE PORT.

4. SOUTH LEBANON.

A. UN UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL BRIAN URQUHART
FLEW BACK TO BEIRUT FROM JERUSALEM ON AUGUST 22 FOR
A LUNCHEON MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS
AND LEBANESE UN AMBASSADOR GHASSAN TUEINI. BOUTROS
TOLD REPORTERS AFTERWARDS THAT, "ONE CANNOT SAY THAT
MR. URQUHART ARRIVED AT POSITIVE AND DEFINITE RESULTS
IN ISRAEL," BUT ADDED THAT "SOME PROGRESS SHOULD
BECOME APPARENT IN A FEW DAYS."

B. ALSO, ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, URQUHART
RAISED THREE QUESTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE LEBANESE WITH
THE ISRAELIS. THE FOLLOWING WERE REPORTEDLY THE
LEBANESE QUESTIONS AND ISRAELI ANSWERS.

--QUESTION: WHY IS THE IDF MAINTAINING FOUR
PERMANENT OBSERVATION POSTS AND TEN MOBILE POSITIONS
IN LEBANON?

--ANSWER: ISRAEL FORMALLY DENIED IT WAS MAIN-
TAINING POSITIONS IN LEBANON.

--QUESTION: WHY IS TEL AVIV OBSTRUCTING THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF LEGAL LEBANESE AUTHORITY IN THE
BORDER REGION?

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 04894 02 OF 02 231230Z

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 4894

-- ANSWER: ISRAEL DOES NOT OPPOSE THE ESTABLISH-
MENT OF LEBANESE LEGAL AUTHORITY IN SOUTH LEBANON, BUT
IT SHOULD BE USED TO COMBAT THE PALESTINIANS, NOT THE
CHRISTIAN MILITIAS.

-- QUESTION: WHY HAS ISRAEL REFUSED TO ALLOW THE
LEBANESE ARMY UNIT AT KAWKABA TO MOVE FORWARD?

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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 04894 02 OF 02 231230Z

-- ANSWER: ISRAEL TRIED TO PUT PRESSURE ON SA'AD
HADDAD TO COOPERATE, BUT WAS PERSUADED BY HIM THAT
THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH IS LINKED TO THAT IN BEIRUT
AND THAT THE PRO-SYRIAN UNITS COULD NOT BE ALLOWED
IN THE BORDER REGION. ISRAEL WOULD RECONSIDER ITS
POSITION IF THERE WERE A SYRIAN RETREAT FROM BEIRUT

5. MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON.

A. CHRISTIAN MILITIA IN MARJAYUN FIRED ON HASBAYYA, MIMIS
AND SYN QINYA FOR ABOUT AN HOUR THE EVENING OF AUGUST 22,
WOUNDING THREE CIVILIANS, ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR.
L'ORIENT-LE JOUR SAID THE INCIDENT WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN
AUGUST 21 ULTIMATUM OF SA'AD HADDAD, WHO HAD THREATENED TO
SHELL THE INHABITANTS OF HASBAYYA IF THEY DID NOT RETURN
TEN CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN WHO HAD DISAPPEARED IN THE AREA.
UPI REPORTED THAT PALESTINIANS HAD DETAINED HADDAD'S MEN,
BUT RELEASED THEM.

B. ELSEWHERE THERE WERE THREE FIRING INCIDENTS INVOLVING
UNIFIL NEAR AS SIDDIQIN, SOUTHEAST OF TYRE. FRENCH TROOPS
FIRED ON FEDAYEEN WHEN THEY TRIED TO INFILTRATE THROUGH
UNIFIL LINES. THE FEDAYEEN RETURNED THE FIRE, BUT RETREATED
AFTER NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE FRENCH.

C. NEAR TIBNIN, ARMED MEN IN A TRUCK FIRED AUTOMATIC WEAPONS
AT AN IRISH OBSERVATION POST. IN RACHAYYA AL FUKHKHAR NORWEGIAN
TROOPS EXCHANGED FIRE WITH PALESTINIANS, AND ONE PALESTINIAN
WAS WOUNDED.

6. FUAD LAHOUD'S CAR DYNAMITED.

A. THE EVENING OF AUGUST 22 THE CADILLAC OF PARLIAMENTARY
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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 04894 02 OF 02 231230Z

DEFENSE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FUAD LAHOUD WAS DYNAMITED IN FRONT
OF HIS HOME NEAR THE HAMRA ARE OF WEST BEIRUT. LAHOUD IS ONE
OF THE SPONSORS OF A BILL TO REORGANIZE THE LEBANESE ARMY.

B. THE BLAST CAME ONE DAY AFTER A PARLIAMENTARY SUB-COMMITTEE

WORKING ON THE BILL ANNOUNCED AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT
ON THE FORMATION OF A HIGHER
DEFENSE COUNCIL TO TAKE OVER DECISION MAKING POWERS NOW VESTED
LARGELY IN THE ARMY COMMANDER. THE CREATION OF THE COUNCIL IS
ONE OF THE BILL'S MAJOR PROVISIONS.

7. MORE ISRAELI OVERFLIGHTS.

TWO ISRAELI PLANES BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER OVER JUNIYAH ABOUT
1700 HOURS ON AUGUST 22. ISRAELI PLANES HAD ALSO BROKEN THE
SOUND BARRIER OVER BEIRUT ON AUGUST 20, ATTACKED TWO PALES-
TINIAN CAMPS THE MORNING OF AUGUST 21, AND THEN AGAIN BROKE
THE SOUND BARRIER OVER BEIRUT AROUND 1230 HOURS ON AUGUST 21.

8. LATE ITEM: SNIPER-FIRE BROKE OUT ON THE FUAD SHIHAB FLY-
WAY BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT AT AROUND 11:30 HOURS AUGUST
23 AND HAS CUT TRAFFIC THERE COMPLETELY. FIVE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN
KILLED. AS OF 13:00 HOURS, THE MUSEUM CROSSING TO EAST BEIRUT
HOWEVER REMAINS OPEN.

DECON 10/23/78.

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